CLAIMS

What is claimed as invention is:

1. A golf swing training apparatus, comprising:

a shaft having a longitudinal axis, a clubhead end, and a grip end;

a grip affixed to said grip end with which a golfer holds said apparatus;

a weighted mass affixed to said clubhead end, said weighted mass selected from the group consisting of a golf clubhead and a weight; and

a primary housing affixed to said shaft between said grip and said weighted mass and having at least one throughhole for removable insertion of either light emitting means or a swing weight.

2. The swing training apparatus of claim 1, wherein said primary housing has at least two throughholes.

3. The swing training apparatus of claim 2, further including:

a first light emitting means removably inserted in one of said throughholes for providing a first beam of light downwardly from said primary housing and toward said weighted mass and substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said shaft, said first light emitting means having a switch for selective operation; and

at least one weight removably inserted in another throughhole.

4. The swing training apparatus of claim 3, wherein said light emitting means is a laser.

5. The swing training apparatus of claim 3, including two weights removably insertable into each of said throughholes in said primary housing.

6. The swing training apparatus of claim 1, wherein said primary housing includes mounting means, and further including a secondary housing removably attachable to said primary housing on said mounting means, said secondary housing having a throughhole for removable insertion of either light emitting means or a weight, said secondary housing and said primary housing separated a distance by a spacer.

7. The swing training apparatus of claim 6, further including second light emitting means removably inserted into said throughhole of said secondary housing for directing a beam of light upwardly and in the direction of said grip and substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said shaft, said second light emitting means having a switch for selection operation.

8. The swing training apparatus of claim 7, wherein said second light emitting means is a laser.

9. The swing training apparatus of claim 1, wherein said grip is split-handle grip having a fixed upper grip portion with an upper end and a lower end; and a slidable lower grip portion having an upper end and a lower end, said fixed upper grip portion for gripping with the non-dominant hand in the golf swing and said slidable lower grip portion adapted for gripping with the dominant hand.

10. The swing training apparatus of claim 9, wherein said lower end of said fixed upper grip portion includes an upper grip expansion having a thumb slot oriented to ensure proper upper hand positioning by the golfer, a head, and a shield behind which to position the thumb and the forefinger of the upper hand and thereby to protect them from being pinched when the two grip portions are joined after being separated during the swing; and wherein said slidable lower grip portion includes a lower grip expansion defining a recess for receiving and coupling with said head of said upper grip expansion.

11. The swing training apparatus of claim 10, wherein said lower grip expansion further includes an upper edge which approximates said shield of said fixed upper grip portion when said fixed upper grip and said slidable lower grip portions are coupled.

12. The swing training apparatus of claim 10, wherein said fixed upper grip portion includes an opening at said upper end for receiving an expansible collar and a throughhole for insertion and retention of an extendable extension rod which selectively extends from the upper end of said fixed upper grip portion and the length of which is adjustable with selective loosening and tightening of said collar.

13. The swing training apparatus of claim 9, wherein said shaft has a substantially cylindrical cross-sectional shape at said grip end and said clubhead end, and further includes a non-cylindrical medial portion.

14. The swing training apparatus of claim 13, wherein said fixed upper grip portion has an interior wall that is substantially round in cross-section, and wherein said slidable lower grip portion has an interior wall shaped to conform to said non-cylindrical medial portion of said shaft.

15. The swing training apparatus of claim 14, wherein said non-cylindrical medial portion of said shaft prevents rotation of said slidable lower grip portion as it is slid up and down said shaft during use.

16. The swing training apparatus of claim 9, further including biasing means interposed between said lower end of said slidable lower grip portion and said primary housing, said biasing means urging said slidable lower grip portion into contact with said fixed upper grip portion when no force is applied to said slidable lower grip portion to separate it from said fixed upper grip portion, and wherein the position of said primary housing is adjustable on said shaft and defines the range of possible motion of said slidable lower grip portion.

17. The swing training apparatus of claim 16, wherein said biasing means is a compression spring.

18. The swing training apparatus of claim 1, further including a keeper having mounting means, an interior hole conforming in shape to said shaft and mounted on said shaft, and retention means for selectively adjusting and fixing the position of said keeper on said shaft; and wherein said primary housing has a channel defining at least one interior surface extending the length of

the housing, and wherein said primary housing is mounted on said keeper,

19. The swing training apparatus of claim 18, wherein said keeper is substantially cuboidal and said mounting means comprises at least one slot having an upper end opening and a lower end stop; and wherein said primary housing includes at least one surface ridge disposed on said interior wall so that said surface ridge of said interior wall of said primary housing slides into the slot in said keeper and is retained by the lower end stop.

20. The swing training apparatus of claim 19; wherein said primary housing includes an upper end, and wherein said at least one surface ridge extends upwardly to a surface ridge upper end defining a space between said surface ridge upper end and said upper end of said primary housing.

21. The swing training apparatus of claim 20, further including a stop shaped and sized to nest within the channel of said primary housing at the space defined by said surface ridge upper end, said stop having an interior opening including a spring-containing portion shaped to allow insertion of at least a portion of said biasing means and a shaft-engaging portion having a shape conforming to said non-cylindrical medial portion of said shaft.

22. A golf swing training apparatus, comprising:

a shaft having a longitudinal axis, a clubhead end, and a grip end;

a split-handled grip affixed to said grip end with which a golfer holds said apparatus, said

grip including a fixed upper grip portion with an upper end and a lower end, and a slidable lower grip portion having an upper end and a lower end, said fixed upper grip portion for gripping with the non-dominant hand in the golf swing and said slidable lower grip portion adapted for gripping with the dominant hand;

a weighted mass affixed to said clubhead end, said weighted mass selected from the group consisting of a golf clubhead and a weight;

a primary housing affixed to said shaft between said grip and said weighted mass and having at least one throughhole for removable insertion of either light emitting means or a swing weight;

first light emitting means removably inserted into one of the throughholes in said primary housing for directing a first beam of light downwardly and toward said clubhead end of said shaft and substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said shaft;

a secondary housing removably attached to said primary housing, said secondary housing having a throughhole for removable insertion of light emitting means;

second light emitting means removably inserted into the throughhole in said secondary housing for directing a second beam of light upwardly and toward said grip end of said shaft and substantially parallel to said longitudinal axis of said shaft; and

biasing means interposed between said lower end of said slidable lower grip portion and said primary housing, said biasing means urging said slidable lower grip portion into contact with said fixed upper grip portion when no force is applied to said slidable lower grip portion to separate it from said fixed upper grip portion;

wherein the position of said primary housing is adjustable on said shaft and defines the

range of possible motion of said slidable lower grip portion.

23. A method of teaching proper golf swing motion, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a swing training apparatus as in claim 22;

(b) adjusting the position of the primary housing on the shaft;

(c) installing the first light emitting means in one of the throughholes in the primary housing;

(d) installing the second light emitting means in the throughhole in the secondary housing;

(e) switching on the first and second light emitting means;

(f) while holding the slidable lower grip portion with the dominant hand and the fixed upper grip portion of the non-dominant hand, addressing a pre-selected ball location and aiming at a target;

(g) executing the initial motions of the backswing, and while so moving tracing the target line with the downwardly directed beam of light until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground;

(h) continuing execution of the backswing, and while so moving tracing the toe line with the upwardly directed beam of light until the top of the backswing is reached;

(i) during either or both of steps (g) and (h), separating the slidable grip portion from the fixed grip portion a desired distance;

(j) executing the initial motions of the downswing until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground;

(k) executing the wrist uncocking phase of the downswing, and while so moving tracing

the target line with the downwardly directed beam of light to and through impact until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground; and

(l) during either or both of steps (j) and (k), moving the slidable lower grip portion closer to the fixed upper grip portion so that as the weighted mass at the clubhead end of the shaft passes through the ball location, the slidable lower grip portion is in contact with the fixed upper grip portion.

24. The method of claim 23, further including the step of tracing the toe line with the upwardly directed beam of light during step (j).

25. The method of claim 23, further including the step of tracing the target line with the upwardly directed beam of light during step (j).

26. A method of teaching golf swing mechanics and a proper golf swing plane, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a golf swing training apparatus as in claim 7;

(b) providing at least one pair of spaced-apart swing plane indicator lines including a toe line and a target line;

(c) installing first light emitting means in one of the throughholes in the primary housing;

(d) installing second light emitting means in the throughhole in the secondary housing;

(e) switching on the first and second light emitting means;

(f) addressing a pre-selected ball location and aiming at a target;

(g) executing a backswing, and while so moving tracing the target line with the downwardly directed beam of light until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground;

(h) continuing execution of the backswing, and while so moving tracing the toe line with the upwardly directed beam of light until the top of the backswing is reached;

(i) executing the initial motions of the downswing until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground; and

(j) executing the wrist uncocking phase of the downswing, and while so moving tracing the target line with the downwardly directed beam of light to and through impact until the shaft is parallel to the plane of the ground.

27. The method of claim 26, further including the step of tracing the toe line with the upwardly directed beam of light during step (i).

28. The method of claim 26, further including the step of tracing the target line with the upwardly directed beam of light during step (i).